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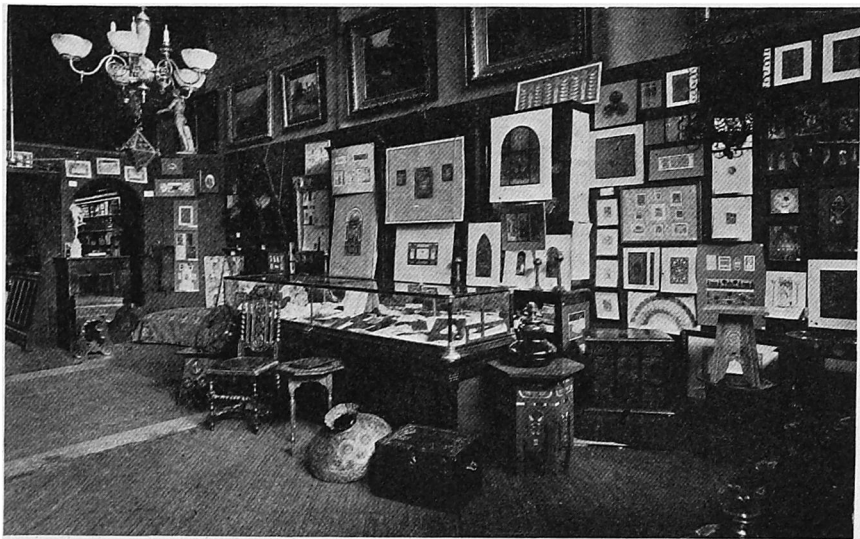
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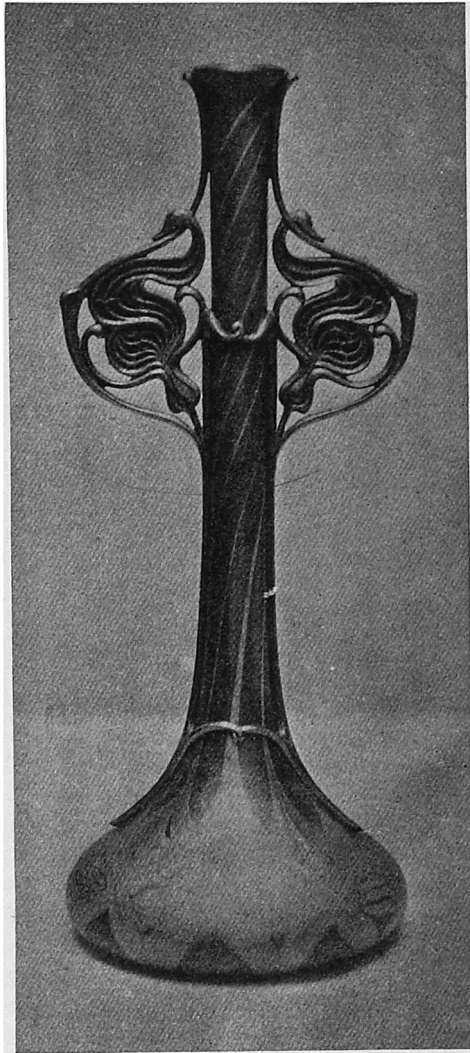


ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITION, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

THE ARTS AND CRAFTS MOVEMENT AT HOME AND ABROAD

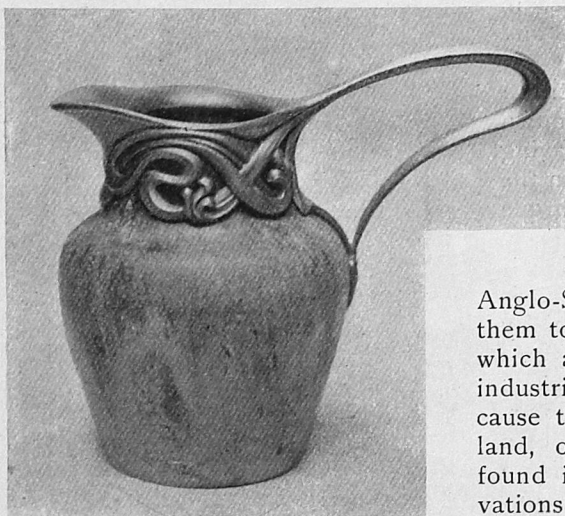
No art movement of any sort whatsoever has been so widespread, so popular, and so practical as that of the "arts and crafts." Just why we say "arts and crafts" is a bit interesting in itself, although it means merely art and things going together, for it is a consideration, or rather an acceptance, of any bit of craftsmanship just so long as it is artistic. And like poor Hamlet's contemplative dreaming, "There comes the rub," inasmuch as persons have been attempting to tell one another what was artistic and what is artistic, and what was not and what is not, these several centuries; and yet, with all the deep and learned disquisitions of what constitutes art and the æsthetic, or what determines the artist and the æsthete, we have not come upon any agreeable or lasting dogma whose acceptance will formulate the whole business. For this very reason the tottering remains of the sculleries of our ancestors harbor stores of dishpans and the like which our present sense of æsthetism has brought us to consider examples of the absolute of artistic application in dishpan or rush-seat chair craftsmanship. We give much applause nowadays to those clever artists who are amusing themselves with engraving wood blocks, proofs from which can scarcely be told from the prints of the presses of the early eighteenth century, when artists were struggling to attain the refinements of that which is culminating in the work of the illustrators

of to-day. It would be most unjust, however, to intimate that there is any spirit of retrogression in this movement of the arts and crafts; it is rather that we have recently come to realize, in our mad race for art and culture, how we have left much behind in a certain self-sufficient manner—much that was of the best—leaving it, but forgetting that on the way up to our proud throne of appreciation the same step which led us thither is not to be despised, for it is part of the whole, especially as we may have the desire to roam down and around again; and as art is a peaceful pursuit, or is supposed to be a peaceful pursuit, there is no reason for burning our bridges behind us—it is better to cross and recross the channels of the æsthetic by means of those same bridges. The art-craftsman is rather insisting on those principles of appreciation which make good things good and which will preserve and permeate them. Even the heathen Chinaman may be regarded as an ideal arts and crafts professor, because such *objects d'art* as the very practical and beautiful jade snuff-bottles have held their position in his appreciation for a thousand years, and in yours from the time you can remember. Crudity is never “aimed at” by the true art-craftsman; only such a one realizes that it is quite possible to carry finishing processes to such an extent that the object in process of evolution is “smoothed” to death. Excessive finishing is often the disease which retards the wholesome development of many



VASE WITH METAL ORNAMENT

of our arts. It must be understood that this applies almost alone to the preparation of surfaces, the trend of lines, and not so much to the matter of ornamentation.



A PITCHER WITH METAL HANDLE

One might suppose that France, above all other countries, would lead in this Renaissance of the arts and crafts. But the natural antagonism of the French for the

Anglo-Saxon has perhaps led them to ignore the new ideas which are rapidly penetrating industrial art for so long because they originated in England, or the solution may be found in their dislike of innovations and their subserviency to traditional forms and customs.

Whatever the reason, the fact remains that until within a few

years there was no artistic impulse in the trades. Work was honestly and thoroughly done, for your French workman is thorough, whatever else he may be; but the artists did not meddle; it was not their affair. They painted easel pictures that found no sales, for the market was over-supplied, or they carved statues that in a few cases decorated the halls of some provincial museum, or if they were very successful, they got into the Luxembourg; but none of them thought it worth their while to learn the possibilities of delicate expression in a piece of ivory, or to study lines in a piece of furniture, or to reconquer the goldsmith's art. All this was too trifling to be worthy their attention; and so the wallpaper manufacturers continued to produce the same old designs in wall-covering, the furniture manufacturers the same banal and clumsy models that they had been making for twenty-five years, except when they were employed in making spurious Louis XV. or Louis XVI. furniture, to be sold to the *nouveau riche* American; and the jewelers continued to have designs made in their shops that would attract the rich bourgeois, who would never demand how many other people had the very same thing, provided it was costly and conspicuous enough to please him. The only trade where there was any artistic feeling at all was in iron-working, and this was owing to its intimate connection with architecture. The balustrades, the

window-gratings, and the lock and hinge work on the huge *portes cochères* is generally good in design and workmanship.

The French workman, more than any other, feels the dignity of his *métier*, whatever it is. He begins at twelve or thirteen as an apprentice, he becomes an employé, and afterward a patron or employer, but he rarely changes his trade or occupation; and it is here



A DINING-ROOM SHELF IN OAK

that one would naturally look for the descendant of the craftsman of the Middle Ages. Many things are done by hand which with us have long been done by machinery, and the conditions will remain the same for many years to come, because of the natural conservatism of the people and because it is difficult to find employment for the population. If machinery were used as extensively as it is in America, there would be no way for France to maintain the population she has. They would be forced to emigrate, or the government would have to create some new departments, and this would be impossible. All this is only to show that here is a most favorable soil for the

development of industrial art, and within five years there has been a great change. The best artists do not now scorn to design furniture, to model and decorate faïence, to carve wood, or to devote themselves to any one of what might be called the minor arts, though in their direct influence on daily life they are perhaps the more important ones. Some artists even succeed in several widely diverse lines;



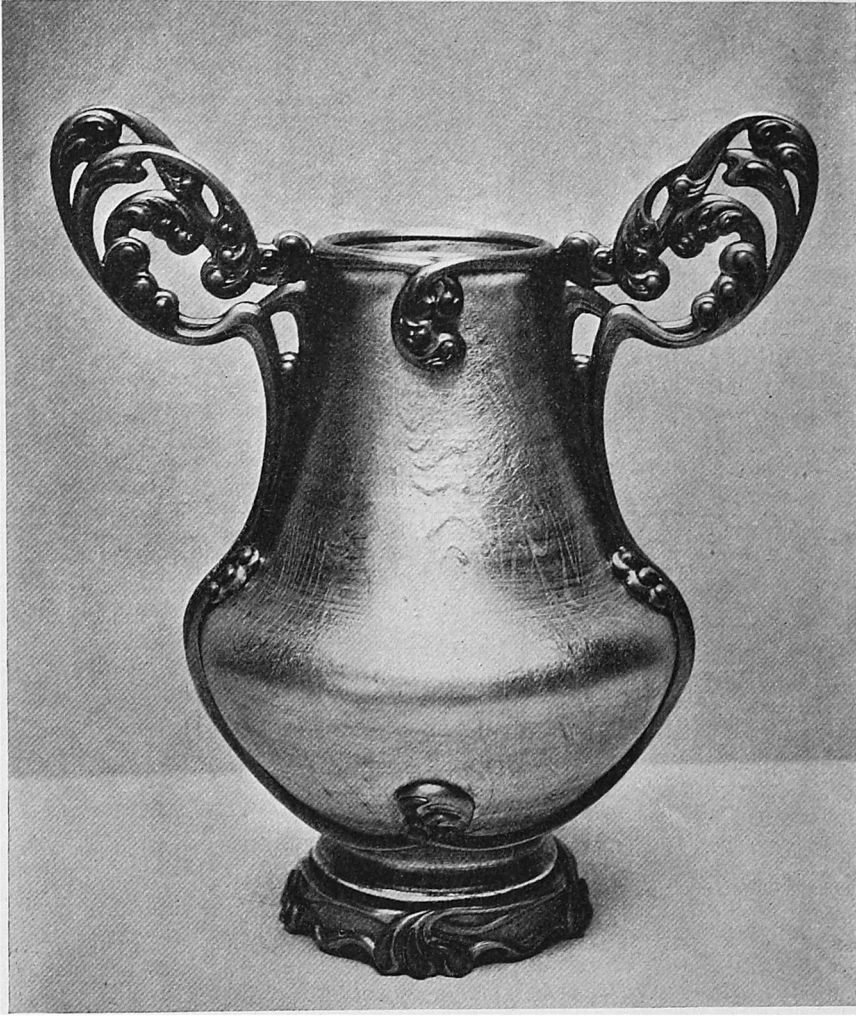
VINAIGRETTE OF JADE, WITH PINK PEARL SET IN TOP

and when it is considered that in each a trade must be learned before the artist can begin to express himself at all, there is no limit to one's admiration for such workers.

There is Damp, for instance. Every one knows his bit of sculpture in the Luxembourg, "*Le Baiser de l'Aïeulle*," and he has done a great deal first and last in sculpture, though it was by his babies that he was best known for a long time. Now he is known by the variety and beauty of his *objects d'art*. In every salon he has either an exquisitely carved figure in wood and ivory or some charming design in furniture or something in wrought metal. His latest achievement that has added to his glory is a door designed for his own dining-room, which was exhibited a few days ago at the Society of "*l'Art pour Tout*." It is of beautifully grained wood, the pieces chosen so that there is a certain sym-

metry of line. It is divided into three panels, folding one upon another to make as large an opening as possible, in order that the dining-room may be quickly cleared after meals, and each panel is divided into two unequal parts. Each panel is framed in iron, forged with the utmost simplicity, which makes a strong framework for the door. The locks, hinges, and door-handle are all of forged iron, and very simple in design. Across each of the two upper side panels spreads a bundle of wheat; this is carved wood, the same as the door itself; and across the top are bunches of grapes and leaves and the scriptural admonition, "*Thou shalt eat thy bread by the sweat of thy brow*." It is dignified, strong, and simple. Some one called it a sketch in sculpture. At the same exhibition was a charming standing cabinet for albums, designed by Hérbla, of inlaid wood. He uses no artificially colored wood, but each piece is chosen with the

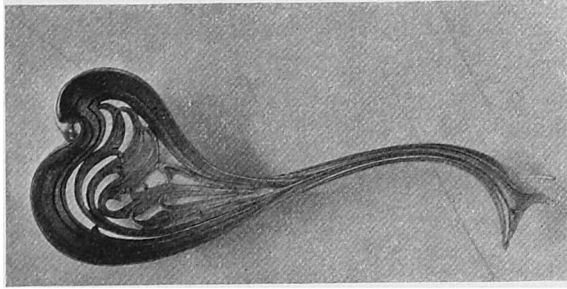
greatest care, and most artistically combined. This inlaid woodwork is used with very happy effect.



TIFFANY VASE, WITH GILDED SILVER MOUNTING

In one of the last exhibitions was a sleeping-room designed by Conty, a combination of cretonne and marqueterie that was most effective and original. The colors in the wood were carried out in the cretonne, and the designs on the wood were floral in character.

Most of the new things in decorative art for the home can be seen



A PIN IN GOLD

not only the absolutely new things that are made in the studios attached, but you find as well samples of the best decorative domestic art of other countries. For instance, in one large case were specimens of the Rörstrand pottery, which is more beautiful than the Copenhagen ware. There was also a vase from the Grueby pottery, near Boston, really most artistic, the lotus-cup for the central part and leaves terminating in long filaments surrounding it.

There is a Tiffany vase, mounted in silver, gilded, set with coral, and toned to harmonize with the warm color of the glass. The most perfect specimens of the favrile glass are selected for mounting, and a design that supplements and completes the special form of the vase is made. The idea is that the mounting should be kept subordinate, and this is especially well carried out in another illustration of a slender flacon-shaped vase, where the spiral handles that have been added only accent the slenderness. Of course these things are veritable works of art, and cannot be sold at a low price. So far that is the difficulty here with the development of the arts and crafts idea. The aim has been to produce something beautiful irrespective of price, so that the common people have not benefited by it, further than that it provides employment for the artisan. There is a society of artists now, however, which has for its special *raison*

at the exhibition of "Art Nouveau," 22 rue de Provence. It is half salesroom and half exhibition-room, but wholly artistic and exceedingly interesting. There you find the latest designs in furniture, the newest thing in jewelry and wrought gold, and



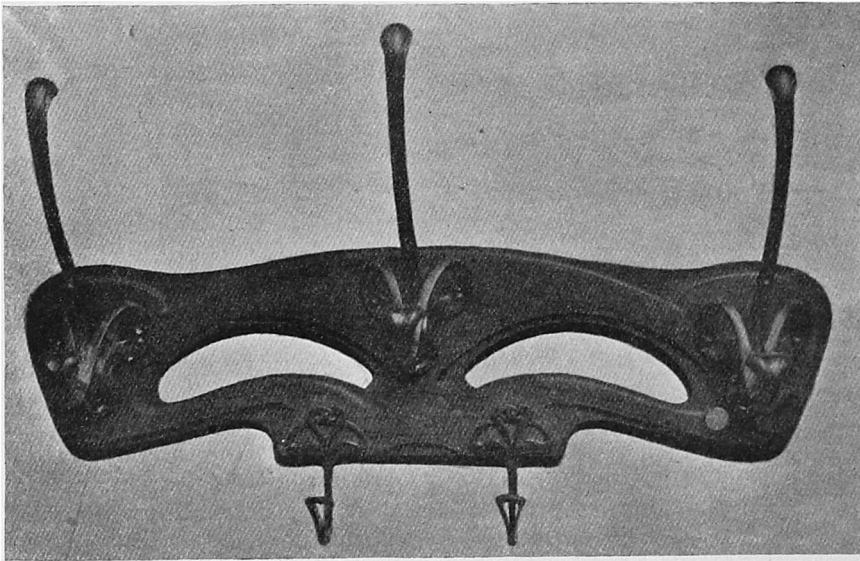
PENDANT IN GOLD, WITH SWAN IN WHITE ENAMEL

d'être the manufacture of inexpensive household accessories that are better in design than the things to be found in the shops. This society will show in the exposition a workman's home completely furnished. Special designs have been made for everything in it, with the aim of proving that an interior can be suitable, practical, and artistically satisfying for very little money.

There is some excellent work in wood at the "Art Nouveau" rooms in the smaller pieces of furniture. Our illustration shows an excellent model for a hat and coat rack. It is of walnut, beautifully grained and polished, and with hooks and screws of burnished copper. It is simple, strong, and practical. Our illustration shows a shelf for a dining-room, with hooks underneath for cups or jugs, that is exceedingly good in line. It is of carefully chosen oak, finished and well set together, all done, of course, by hand, and very decorative

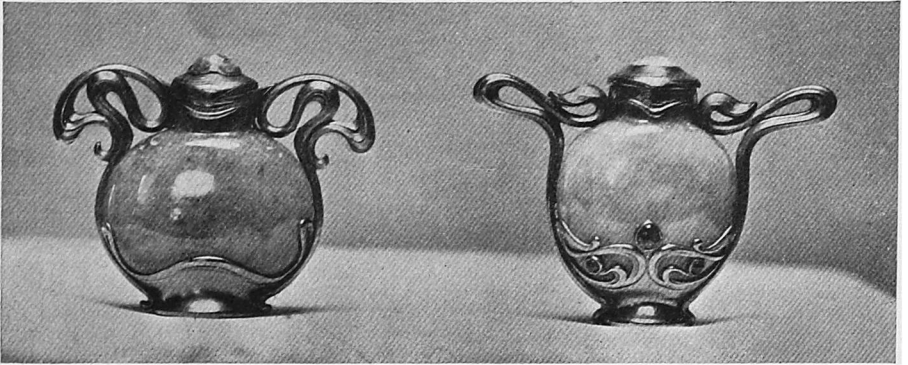


BELT BUCKLE, OPAL SET
IN GOLD



HAT AND COAT RACK

in effect. Another illustration shows an exceedingly pretty tea-table of mahogany. Observe how the design is always adapted to the kind of wood. This could only be developed in wood of a particularly



FLACONS OF AGATE, WITH GOLD MOUNTING

fine grain. In oak the slender carved legs and supports would have given the effect of being on the bias.

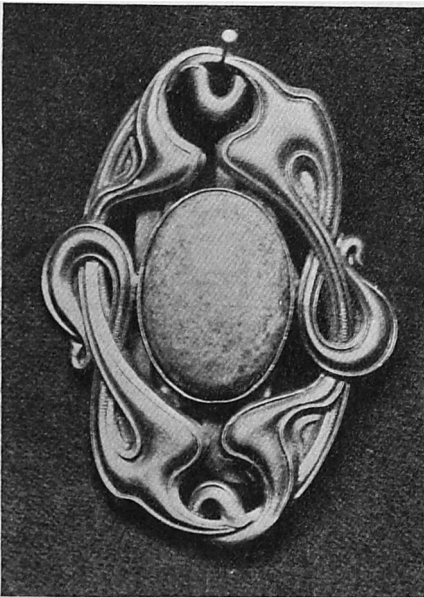
Some of the most successful designs in the way of jewelry are in belt buckles and pendants. One is by Colonna, of gold, with a heart-shaped opal set in the upper left-hand corner. It is light in effect, and yet sufficiently solid-looking.

Another example is a pendant by Bing, made in gold with blue and the swan in white enamel, and is exquisite in workmanship. The idea is rather new, also, and suggests Lohengrin. It may have been made for some special occasion.

Another beautiful buckle is in gold, with greenish blue iridescent enamel set with an opal in the center.

The tiny flacons shown here are of agate with gold mounting; one has a ruby and the other a pearl in the top. They are for salts or scent, as the case may be, and they are very beautiful.

In a city where there is such luxurious living as in Paris there would naturally be a market for such things. The more expensive these *objects d'art* are, the more they are



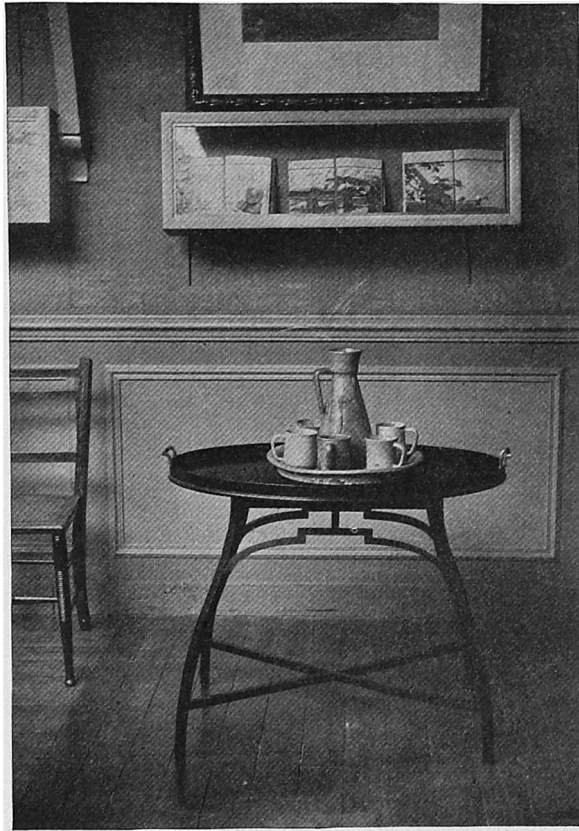
BUCKLE OF GOLD AND BLUE ENAMEL, WITH OPAL IN CENTER

appreciated, especially if the model happens to be something very difficult to duplicate. A particularly good design for a vinaigrette is here reproduced. This is of jade, with a large pink pearl set in the top, the mounting being very effective. The sugar-spoon is very graceful, not especially new perhaps, and more for ornament than use, but very decorative in line. A very beautiful hall lantern on view was a globe made of irregular pieces of gray greenish glass, set in yellow brass and hung by a brass chain made up of links of varying length. It was hand-forged, of course, and the brass was lusterless—altogether most beautiful.

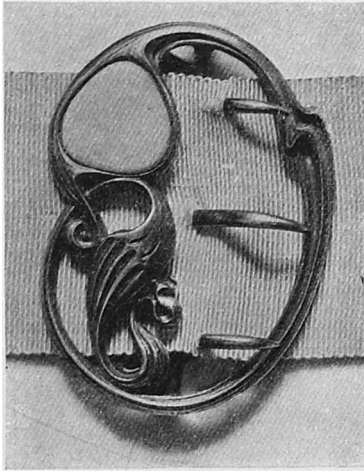
Red copper is used a great deal in electric-light fixtures, and wrought iron very little. They think here that the brighter metal harmonizes much better with modern interiors, and they are probably right. Repoussé work in copper is considerably and most successfully used. One

lovely lantern had spreading acanthus-leaves in repoussé, underneath which were bud-shaped burners hung by spiral wires in yellow copper.

In England the arts movement has had its heartiest reception, its most ancient foundation, and its most profitable encouragement. William Morris did for arts and crafts what George Washington did for young America—he fathered it. His work along the lines of book-making made the Kelmscott publications almost peerless for their beauty and the equality of their excellence. The Morris designs gave



MAHOGANY TEA-TABLE



BELT BUCKLE, WITH OPAL SETTING

phases of the results of the Briton's initiative. Spain has borrowed her spirit in this movement from Germany, unusual as it may seem, while Russia has ever been under a certain oriental influence. Sweden and Norway have been unusually independent in their craftsmanship, and the designs of their objects of utility have a beauty which has held through many hundred years. Belgium, more than Holland, has taken up with arts and crafts, while Austria is more in sympathy with the work done by the French. As Italian taste is proverbially abominable, there is little from that peninsula, outside Venice, Milan, and Padua, worth the thought, finger-rings excepted. Wood-carvings represent the arts and crafts of Switzerland, for one can scarcely reconcile the endless timepieces of Geneva to the order of the movement.

And now we are brought to our own country. It is a very short time now since America welcomed the arts and crafts idea, and it probably came to us, not through the channels of art, as we might suppose, but rather through the invitation of our bibliophiles, who were beginning to import Morris books, and finally brought over Morris chairs in which to sit while they read the books! From an appreciation

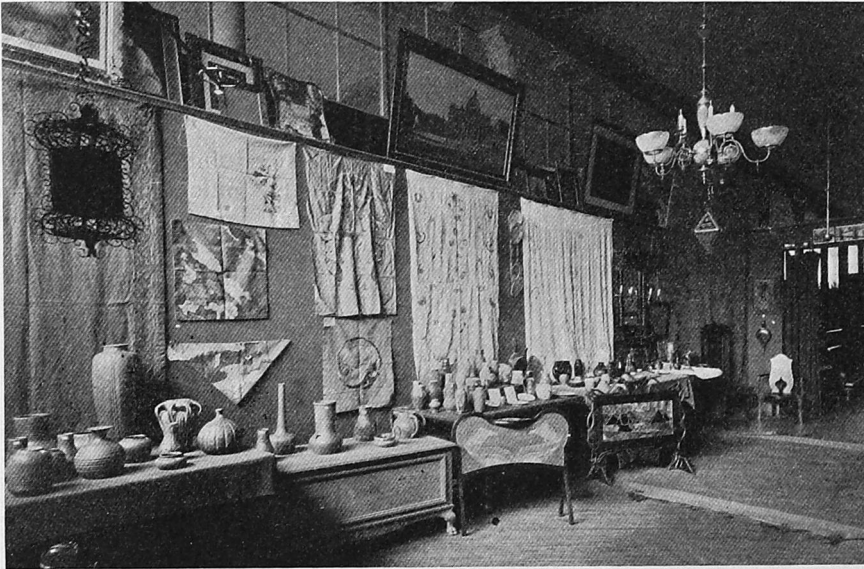
a wonderful impetus to textiles and their making, and through the conception of "Morris" furniture most of our excellent designs of to-day have been made possible. Then Sir Edward Burne-Jones and other artists restored the art of leaded glass, and splendid as has been the work of the French binderies, none of them have approached in beauty of the æsthetic sort the products of Mr. Cobden-Sanderson of the Dove bindery. "Liberty" fabrics are world-renowned, and stand for the highest in artistic fabrics.

Germany has taken a sudden and mighty interest in art and crafts, and in some respects the products of the Teutons surpass certain



PENDANT, WITH CHAIN

of these works from the Kelmscott Press our interest passed on to this thing and that, and then came the Chap-Book and a host of equally bizarre bibelots, and the influence of Aubrey Beardsley on our draughtsmen and decorators, all of which throw us into the channels of the movement—and here we are! Miss Foote, of the Evelyn Nordhoff bindery, and Miss Starr, of Chicago, are producing exquisitely bound books which compare with the volumes of the Dove bindery. Marguerethe Heisser, of Minneapolis; Mrs. Way, of Chicago, and Mrs. Gotthold, of New York, bring out surpassing illuminations. Mr. Bradley and Mr. Hazenplug are foremost artists in the doing of



ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITION, MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

the little things which make books beautiful. Then Mrs. Yale Wynne, of Chicago, and other local crafts women have wrought exquisitely designed jewelry, and Miss Louise Anderson has won deserved recognition for her splendid furniture and copper work. One has only to think of the Dedham ware, the Greuby faïence, the Volkmar pottery to realize what is doing here in the line of ceramics. The superb conceptions of Mr. Louis C. Tiffany, as shown in his "favrile glass" and in his marvelous leaded windows, metal lamps, glass mosaics, have never been surpassed, and make our foreign fellow-craftsmen envious to despair. We have accomplished less in textiles, perhaps, than have the workers of other countries, but the individuality shown in the work of the American artist-artisan is a tremendous force in his development.